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This finally induced the bishop to revoke the interdict and to reinstate the trustees. When despite this action the non-Catholic worship continued an injunction against it was granted and upheld by the court, on the ground that the objection that existed to such a move while the interdict was still in force had now been cleared away.<sup>1</sup>

These cases, taken together, establish as clearly as can be done the relation of the bishop toward the property of the congregations of his diocese. Outside of what ecclesiastical pressure he may be able to bring to bear and outside of the difficulties which he can cause by his refusal to convey, the property of a Catholic congregation is as much at its disposal as if it stood in its own name. The bishop is merely the dry trustee of the legal title.

To sum up: The American clergyman in the performance of the marriage ceremony is recognized as a public officer and in the performance of his other duties is recognized as a public

man subject to public comment and some slight disabilities and exempt from certain public burdens. His rights against and duties to his congregation rest on a purely contractual basis. Where he is appointed by a bishop such bishop owes him no duty and is not in any way responsible for his acts. Where the property of an individual congregation stands in the name of the bishop such bishop is a mere dry trustee, who may be compelled to convey his legal title to any other trustee. While the relation of the bishop to the property of the congregation in his diocese is thus subject to the law of trusts, the relation of the clergyman to his congregation is subject to the law of contracts, and his relation to the public is subject to the public municipal law and to statutory regulation. Since no legal principle applies to the relation between priest and bishop, such relation is subject merely to the ecclesiastical law of the church to which both owe fealty.

## THE WITNESS OF NATURE TO RELIGION

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The subject is a perplexing one, for it must deal with the transition from an old to a new point of view. The perplexity arises from the fact that no single paper can prepare one to understand fully what the new point of view implies.

Those, therefore, who are familiar only with the traditional conception of the relation between nature and religion cannot be blamed for the feeling that the new conception seems to remove God from nature. In fact it does not, for

<sup>1</sup> *Novickas v. Krauczunas*, 91 Atl. 657 (Pa.).

it magnifies both God and nature; but it takes some time and thought to readjust one's self.

It seems to have been the most natural reaction of primitive man to nature to explain nature by peopling it with invisible beings that must be kept friendly. These imaginary beings expressed their whims in the operations of nature, and it was to the interest of men to be on good terms with them. This original "natural theology" gradually came to express itself in the more organized and dignified form of the Greek and Roman mythologies; and finally, when the conception of numerous gods merged into the Jewish conception of one God, all power over nature was attributed to him. This same conception has continued into the Christian era and still appears in the oft-repeated phrase, "looking through nature up to nature's God."

Any analysis of this conception shows that it is the same, from its original crude expression, to its later refined and dignified expression. In a certain sense it is an evolution of the idea of God and of his place in nature, but throughout it is based upon the feeling that nature is full of mysteries that can only be explained by introducing a mysterious, supernatural, all-powerful Being. In other words, whatever we cannot explain must belong to the domain of the supernatural Being.

In consequence of this belief, bred in the human race throughout its history, it is not surprising that the first real attempts to study nature were regarded as attacks upon religion, and that the more insight into nature a man possessed, the less religious he became.

For a long period this feeling was a serious blockade to the study of nature, and even when nature *was* studied, the same feeling acted as a censor upon any free expression of opinion.

Gradually, however, more and more territory was wrested from the domain of the mysterious, and therefore from whimsical, supernatural operations, and brought under the domain belonging to the laws of nature, which by definition are not supernatural. Such progress in this conquest has been made that it has become obvious that all natural phenomena must be explained by natural laws, and that in no case do we encounter in nature the vagaries once attributed to supernatural control. Of course it is easy to shift our conception of God from a being who commands the *details* of natural phenomena to one who is the author of the laws of nature; but when we have done this, it is simply relegating him to a region of mystery still farther removed from our experience. This, however, is not a *demonstration* of the existence of such a personal God as theology has defined. The day of *natural* theology has passed, for its argument from design is found to be based upon a misconception of the facts. This is not saying that there is no evidence for the existence of such a God, but that it cannot be demonstrated by nature, as was once thought, in the same sense that the laws of nature can be demonstrated.

The evidence must come from some other region of our experience. Of course, religion cannot exist without a God; but religion is much more than theology, for it deals with conduct, and the witness of nature for this aspect of religion is very pertinent. Religion has always

seemed to me to be a universal human impulse, which, when obeyed rationally, develops men and women into the greatest possible human efficiency. This impulse is so universal a possession that it must be reckoned with among the other human impulses, and its significance in human nature should be understood. From the point of view of a biologist (which is of course developed by observation of nature), rational obedience to this impulse results in the best type of development, which means not only the highest development of human capacities, but chiefly the best *balance* of these capacities. For example, the religious impulse does not express itself fully in a trained body or in a trained mind, but in the subordination of the trained body and mind to the trained spirit. This is the most effective balance of one's powers, concerning which there is no serious discussion, and it is the peculiar function of religion to establish it. It is this perfect balance of highly developed capacities that makes Jesus the ideal type of manhood. It is upon this aspect of religion, which means the effective conduct of one's life, that biology has reacted most strongly. The religious impulse, therefore, stimulates men and women into making the most of themselves. I have sometimes defined religion as a sense of obligation that expresses itself in service. At least we have come to think of religion, not as a mystical something that demands belief in things that no one knows, but as something that embodies itself in character, and the measure of character is conduct.

There is a general impression that the progress of science has resulted in the

decline of religion. It is certain that the scientific attitude of mind has contributed somewhat to a clearer distinction between facts and speculations; in fact, religion has a larger expression today than it has ever had before, and science has had no small part in bringing this to pass.

It is most natural for me to speak of the contribution of biology to religion, for that is my own field of work. Of course it differs in no way from the other sciences in the attitude of mind it develops, and this attitude is by far the most valuable result of all scientific training. Especially is it valuable in the sphere of religion, with its inevitable tendency to formulate beliefs and to organize institutions. Whenever we begin to formulate and organize, we begin to define, and a definition always introduces the elements of rigidity. Any important advance in knowledge is likely to break up some old definitions, and especially is this true of so progressive a thing as religion, which is bound to keep step with human progress. Therefore religion, of all subjects, cannot live in the past, but must keep growing continually into the future. It is rigidity toward the old when the new is upon us that has developed all the misunderstandings in reference to religion.

The scientific spirit developed in these latter days is one of inquiry. It insists that competent investigation shall precede belief; it demands that cause and effect shall be related to one another by a series of actual stepping-stones, so close that imagination is rational; and it remembers that a fact is influential only in its own immediate vicinity, and cannot be made the basis of an elaborate

superstructure of wide generalization. As one travels away from a fact, its significance in any conclusion becomes more and more attenuated, like the rays of light from a candle; but the whole structure of many a system of belief lies in the region beyond the vanishing point.

Such a spirit applied to the current expressions of religion strips off the husks of human opinion and discovers the kernel of truth; recognizes at once the relative values of profession and conduct; sees that the only real authority for statements lies in their truth; and insists that the reasonableness of religion is not to be discovered through a series of logical abstractions, but rather through the concrete evidence of its effect on character.

The scientific mind recognizes in Jesus the most scientific attitude toward religion that any religious teacher has ever shown. He is about the only religious teacher who gives no flavor of rigidity, and who never ran to terminology. With scant courtesy he stripped off the husks of human opinion that had enwrapped and concealed religious truth for centuries; he laid supreme emphasis upon conduct; he recognized truth as the only authority from which there is no appeal; and his test for religion was not a philosophy, but a life. Perhaps his supreme genius as a master in religion is shown by his recognition of the fact that all that is finest and most permanent in human conduct develops in response to the stimulus of love, the most controlling human emotion. He did not *select* love as the dominating impulse of the Christian religion; he *recognized* it, and then announced it as

the only impulse that could make religion both dominant and desirable.

Jesus defined the obligation of religion as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." This means that religion must appeal to and use the affection, the intellect, and the physical powers. This triple alliance represents the whole constitution of man. It is evident that, according to the definition of Jesus, a religion that does not include one's intellect, with all of its training and experience, is an incomplete one. It may be affectionate, but it may not be intelligent; it may be emotional, but it may not be sane. Religion of the exclusively emotional sort belongs to certain temperaments, but these temperaments do not often belong to the most effective people; and yet the belief is too prevalent that one must dismiss his reason if he accepts religion; or, as it is sometimes put, he must keep the two in separate compartments of his mind, that they may not interfere with one another. Most men are honest enough to refuse any such arrangement, and under these conditions religion is dismissed and reason retained. This makes it all the more important to realize the fact that the association of reason and religion is not only possible, but that the founder of Christianity insisted that the reason is an essential constituent of religion. This means that religion cannot retain anything that reason rejects; that all the triumphs of reason must ever be consistent with religion; and that loyal affection and a trained mind are helpmeets in the progress of religion.

These statements could be made in connection with the religious value of any training in science. A single illustration may be used to indicate the scientific attitude of mind, the attitude toward religion that the study of nature has developed.

The set of religious principles contained in the ten commandments, or in the Sermon on the Mount, are not authoritative because they are commanded, but because they are true. It is missing the point entirely ever to raise the question whether the ten commandments or the Sermon on the Mount are binding upon this nation or upon that; upon this generation or upon some other. The question simply is whether they contain principles essential to a well-ordered individual or society. If so, they are true, and always apply everywhere, just as does what we call the law of gravitation. Newton has the reputation of having announced the law of gravitation, but I presume no one would say that this law is binding upon us because Newton announced it. The world, like the individual, grows in knowledge, and the childhood of the race was compelled to receive as commands what greater maturity recognizes as statements of eternal truths, infinitely more binding than any command could be. There is no resenting truth, or quibbling about it, and obedience is imperative. Religious truths, therefore, have the eternal and binding qualities of the truths of nature, which we call laws. When this compelling power of knowledge is reinforced by the attraction of a noble emotion, we have the tremendous combination presented by the Christian religion.

One of the common methods of appealing to nature as a witness for religion is to select certain operations of nature as illustrations of certain claims of religion. It must be remembered, however, that an *illustration* is not a *demonstration*; and nature is so large and so varied a book that one may find illustrations for almost any point of view. And yet, nature is full of lessons to the devout mind, lessons that are suggestive and stimulating. But it is one thing to read nature with a point of view already cultivated; and quite another thing to put her on the witness stand and cross-question her with an unprejudiced mind.

In spite of the caution I have suggested, I wish to give one of the most effective illustrations I know of, for it makes vivid one of the claims of religion most difficult to enforce in a materialistic age. When one looks upon a huge tree, with its rigid and enduring trunk and its spreading branches, he is looking upon one of the most permanent objects constructed by living forms. It is certainly a most obvious material fact. It was natural to conclude that this enduring body is constructed of solid materials obtained from the soil. But when we come to analyze the operations of nature more carefully, we discover that the permanent fabric of the tree, that which survives when the trunk is converted into charcoal, was picked out of the air as an invisible gas. In other words, the invisible material makes the permanent structure, while the visible materials vanish. This illustration suggests to the most materialistic mind the possibilities of a structure and a permanency not associated with

the things we see. But do not mistake even so vivid an illustration for a demonstration; it is suggestive of what is possible, and may help some to understand better the claim of religion that the invisible things of the spirit abide, while the gross materials that appeal to our senses pass away.

It is more to the point, however, to give a few illustrations of the direct co-operation of religion and nature, a co-operation which enforces the claims of both.

A student of biology very soon learns that the life processes are processes of nature, and that the violation of a biological law insures a corresponding penalty. Because biological laws are not so obvious as physical laws, men either do not know when they are breaking them, or they are willing to take the risk. The Mosaic laws did not need to forbid a man to walk over a precipice, but they did forbid, often in great detail, the violation of certain biological laws. For example, the relations of the sexes are full of subtle dangers, not only to the individuals concerned, but also to future generations, and no directions of the Mosaic law were sterner and more explicit than were those guarding against these dangers. When infractions of biological laws are recognized to be what they really are, and not merely infractions of social conventions, or of religious precepts, the effect on the development of personal character will be enormous. Moreover, the *religious* value of such an attitude is not to be denied, for many of the most subtle foes of the religious life are to be found in the camp of biological anarchists, who at the same time profess to be religious.

Biology has discovered the fact that the so-called conventions of society, the puritanical conventions if you please, so far as they deal with biological laws, are the results of experience. Like all such experience, it has accumulated very slowly, and only lately has it been reinforced by science. Perhaps until science could emphasize these laws, religion was the only agency that could enforce them. Both seek to produce better men physically and morally. It is sometimes thought that biology looks to the physical man alone, and religion to the moral man alone; but both are weaving threads into the same texture. The best physical man must be moral, and the best moral man must obey the biological laws.

It is a very significant fact that the rules of conduct for the best development of men, discovered first by the experience of the human race and afterward formulated as religious precepts, have now been established as laws by biology. This does not mean that biology deserves credit for their discovery, but that experience, religion, and biology can now combine in enforcing proper conduct; that what was thought to be only a religious precept, deserving only the attention of church members who had pledged themselves to obedience, is also a biological precept as necessary to obey as any other laws of nature; that the penalty of disobedience is not doubtful and distant, but certain and immediate. In short, the appeal for proper conduct has been made stronger, not only for those who would be religious in any event, but also for many who otherwise would not be religious at all.

There is one phase of biology, as it relates to religion and to character, about which I wish to be more explicit. Many of the movements for social betterment are directed against infractions of biological laws, and most of them have become included among our religious activities. The opening of playgrounds for children, the development of park systems, the admission of air and sunlight into tenement houses, the fight against diseases of all kinds, child-labor laws, the struggle for better conditions of labor, the tidal-wave advance against the saloon, are all grounded in sound biology as well as in religion.

Noble as these movements are, and noteworthy as their advance has been, there is lurking behind all of these evils, as a great shadowy background, one that is more general and more destructive than any of them, and because it is so general and so secretive it is the most difficult of all to combat. I refer to the social evil. This is pre-eminently a biological problem, and it is certainly one for whose solution biology and religion must clasp hands.

Recently I have come to know something of the extent and menace of this evil, and in its presence all the evils of liquor and of labor seem secondary in importance. Organizations have been formed to study the situation and to suggest action, but as yet they have done little more than to uncover the dreadful facts. The most evident fact is the universal ignorance of the extent and nature of the evil. In our social order it is kept locked up as a skeleton in the closet, too hideous to reveal.

Biological instruction has here an unexampled opportunity. It has de-

veloped that much of the trouble has come from ignorance, or, what is worse, from misinformation. It is evident that ignorance must be replaced by knowledge, and that misinformation must be corrected. It is also evident that this knowledge must begin in childhood and must be developed through adolescence. This puts the instruction into the home and into the schools. Parents cannot be depended upon, either for knowledge or for willingness, and therefore a large burden rests upon the schools and colleges, with their trained teachers. The ideal school for this instruction is the home, but until more homes are ideal, the schools must supplement.

The teacher of biology has abundant and natural opportunity to develop all the knowledge necessary, to emphasize the dangers, to impress the laws of heredity, to open up such a perspective of biological truth that an infraction of law is with full knowledge of the penalty. The function of religion is to replace the will to break the law by the will to keep it, under the stimulus of a stronger motive than knowledge alone can furnish.

After all, the great campaign is not so much to care for or to warn those who have broken a law of their being, as to fill each generation of young people with an enthusiasm that may fairly be called a religion, a sense of obligation so binding that no temptation can break it.

The organizations for proclaiming the doctrines of heredity, and for pressing upon parents, teachers, physicians, and churches the duty of preaching the gospel of personal purity, and the elimination of any such thing as hereditary taint, are engaged in a biological religious propaganda of the highest importance.

It is in such ways that biology may be used in the service of religion, both in strengthening personal character and in establishing right social relations. It demonstrates that some of the most important precepts of religion are statements of biological truth, and that the strongest personal character and the most effective social order can be developed only by including obedience to biological laws as an important factor. All the illustrations that could be introduced emphasize these same truths in varying degree, and it is evident that biology, dealing as it does with human structure, and therefore with much of human nature, is capable of establishing

peculiarly close relations with religion and with character.

We have discovered in these latter days that the body and the spirit are not mutually destructive antagonists, pitted against each other in mortal combat. Once spiritual development was measured by physical repression; but we have learned of our essential unity; and that body and spirit are fitted to be mutually stimulating. This means that biology and religion may have a common mission in the regeneration of man and of society; that they may be mutually helpful; and that both are needed to achieve the highest possible expression of human power.

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## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BOOK OF GENESIS

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### IX. The Historical Character of Abraham

In the previous article (*Biblical World*, May, 1915, p. 294) we considered the Babylonian sources for the Amorite period (2500-1580 B.C.) and also the Hebrew sources for the same period in the Book of Genesis. We are now ready to consider in this article the historical conception of Abraham that we derive from these sources.

#### A. The Double Tradition in Regard to Abraham

1. *His two names*.—The two names that are given to the patriarch are

evidence that the traditions concerning him have come from two sources. Abram bears also the name Abraham. The names sound similar, but they have no etymological connection. *Ram* in Ab-ram is derived from the verb "to be high," and this name means either "father is high," or "Ram is a father." *Raham* in Ab-rahahm is a root unknown to Hebrew (Canaanite). In Arabic, it means "to send rain." Ab-rahahm would then mean "father has sent rain." Halévy suggests that we should read the name Abirham, "chief of a multi-